

## **Councilmember Deets' Response to 2019-08 Complaint**

With respect to the January 12<sup>th</sup> North Ward Meeting, I stated in my February 13<sup>th</sup> response to Mr. DeRosalia that I did not recall the language that he cited. Subsequently, after jogging my memory a bit I can say that I believe that his quote is most probably accurate. I certainly had no intention to be discriminatory or racist in saying those words. It was spoken off-the-cuff in response to a statement made in the audience, my intention being to convey that, yes, there is diversity on the Island. I fully recognize that my intentions don't matter here. What matters is how Mr. DeRosalia felt by what I said. He didn't like it and that is what matters.

While I fully acknowledge that I was essentially clueless at the time as to the impact of the words that I used (spoken in an clumsy attempt at inclusiveness), I have apologized and tried to make amends to Mr. DeRosalia. Please see the following:

On February 13<sup>th</sup> I wrote to Mr. DeRosalia:

*"While I honestly do not recall the language you cited, I recognize that I can never really know how you felt to what it was I said. The fact that you say you felt uncomfortable is sufficient enough to me to decide that I could have done better, and that I will endeavor to be more mindful of my interactions with you"*

On March 6<sup>th</sup> I wrote to Mr. DeRosalia:

*"As to our interactions, I wanted to tell you how truly sorry I am for the pain that you've experienced. As a Councilmember I hold myself to a high standard of conduct, and I strive to mirror the best aspirations of our community by being courteous, respectful and civil. These are purposefully high aspirations and Councilmembers like all people are flawed. I know that I can do better. Again, I am sorry, and I promise to do better for you."*

Whatever one's intention, attaching labels to a person is not acceptable. I should have been more thoughtful and considerate in my choice of language at the North Ward meeting. Subsequent to the North Ward meeting I reached out to Mr. DeRosalia to apologize and hopefully make amends.

Respectfully,

Joe Deets

April 2, 2019